United Nations A/C.5/55/SR.41

General Assembly
Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
13 February 2001

Original: English

Fifth Committee

Summary record of the 41st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 18 December 2000, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Rosenthal ..... (Guatemala)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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Review of the Information Systems Coordination Committee

Agenda item 116: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (*continued*)

Agenda item 120: Administrative and budgetary coordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 116: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (*continued*)

Draft resolution A/C.5/55/L.19

1. **Mr. Crom** (Netherlands), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/55/L.19 on results-based budgeting, said that the text represented a consensus arrived at during informal consultations. He urged its adoption without a vote.

2. *Draft resolution A/C.5/55/L.19 was adopted.*

3. **Ms. Powles** (New Zealand), speaking also on behalf of Canada and Australia in explanation of position, said that since 1997, when results-based budgeting had first been proposed as part of the Secretary-General's reform programme, the delegations for which she was speaking and others, including those of the Pacific Forum, had expressed strong support for the concept.

4. With the adoption of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to continue to develop indicators of achievement for use in all substantive and support programmes and to include those indicators in all sections of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003, in addition to statements of objectives and expected accomplishments. The performance report for the biennium should also contain an assessment of the performance of the Organization in those terms, in addition to the current method of output measurement. The draft resolution contained references to areas of concern to the Committee, including staff training, the definition of technical terms used, the existence of external factors, the importance of input data, responsibility and accountability, full compliance with the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation Rules, and resource allocation commensurate with all programmes and activities mandated by the General Assembly.

5. The delegations for which she was speaking looked forward to the implementation of the resolution and would continue to take an active interest in the subject.

6. **Mr. Chandra** (India) said that the fact that the text of the draft resolution was so comprehensive reflected the interest that the concept had generated. The measures it contained would provide a useful management tool. His delegation was pleased by the progress its adoption represented.

7. **Mr. Repasch** (United States of America) said that his delegation considered the adoption of the draft resolution a major advance in the implementation of the Secretary-General's reform programme.

8. **Ms. Merchant** (Norway) said that her delegation associated itself with the statement made by the representative of New Zealand.

Draft resolution A/C.5/55/L.20

9. **Mr. Crom** (Netherlands), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/55/L.20 on outsourcing practices, recommended its adoption without a vote.

10. *Draft resolution A/C.5/55/L.20 was adopted.*

Agenda item 125: United Nations pension system (*continued*)

Draft resolution A/C.5/55/L.14

11. **Mr. Ahounou** (Côte d'Ivoire), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/55/L.14 on the United Nations pension system, said that, during the informal consultations, the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board had been taken into account. He urged the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus.

12. *Draft resolution A/C.5/55/L.14 was adopted.*

Agenda item 121: Pattern of conferences (*continued*)

Draft resolution A/C.5/55/L.13

13. **Mr. Kelapile** (Botswana), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/55/L.13, said that it addressed a number of issues relating to the pattern of conferences. He drew attention to section III, which concerned the issue of documentation and attempted to address the root causes of the continued difficulty with the late submission of documentation. Although the Secretariat had made commendable efforts in that area, an additional concerted effort by all stakeholders was still

needed. He urged the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus.

14. *Draft resolution A/C.5/55/L.13 was adopted.*

Agenda item 176: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (A/55/666, A/55/688)

15. **Mr. Yeo** (Director of the Peacekeeping Financing Division), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) (A/55/666), said that the Security Council, by its resolution 1312 (2000) of 31 July 2000, had established UNMEE for an initial period of six months. Subsequently, by its resolution 1320 (2000), the Council had extended its mandate until 15 March 2001 and had authorized the deployment of up to 4,200 troops, including up to 220 military observers.

16. The initial estimate for the establishment of the Mission had been set at $199,075,800 gross, based on the best available information as at 4 December 2000. On 11 December, the Division had given ACABQ updated information which had resulted in a reduction of the estimate to $190.6 million.

17. The action to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with the financing of UNMEE was set out in paragraph 48 of the report.

18. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman, Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) introducing the report of the Advisory Committee (A/55/688), said that the Advisory Committee had not had sufficient time to give detailed consideration to the report of the Secretary-General and had therefore made interim recommendations in accordance with the procedure set forth in General Assembly resolution 49/233. Those recommendations were to be found in paragraphs 11 and 12 of its report. In brief, it recommended that the General Assembly should authorize commitment authority of $150 million gross, which should be assessed, and that the Secretary-General should be allowed some flexibility with regard to staffing. Finally, paragraph 10 referred to some elements of concern that would need clarification from the representatives of the Secretary-General.

19. **Mr. Chandra** (India) requested clarification from the Secretariat on why the Advisory Committee had not received the report in time to allow for thorough consideration. He would also like to hear a justification of the structure of the Mission, including senior staff. His delegation concurred with the recommendations in paragraphs 11 and 12 of the report of ACABQ.

20. **Mr. Getachew** (Ethiopia) said that Ethiopia and Eritrea had signed a peace agreement only days earlier and the current discussion further consolidated the implementation of the UNMEE mandate. His delegation fully supported and endorsed the recommendations of ACABQ and hoped for speedy action on the item in order to facilitate the work of the Mission.

21. **Mr. Kelapile** (Botswana) said that his delegation fully associated itself with the statement made by the representative of Ethiopia in support of the work and mandate of UNMEE. It commended the recent signing of the peace agreement in Algiers and was impressed by the continuing commitment on the part of the two Governments to their June agreement. The establishment of UNMEE and the extension of its mandate were highly commendable, and his delegation noted the steady progress being made in putting the Mission into operation. However, if the Special Representative of the Secretary-General was to be able to exercise fully his authority, there was an urgent need to finalize and fully deploy the resource requirements arising from the Security Council resolutions.

22. His delegation looked forward to receiving more information on how ACABQ intended to address the areas of concern regarding the structure of the Mission mentioned in paragraph 10 of its report.

23. **Mr. Alatrash** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that his delegation was pleased at the progress made in Ethiopia and Eritrea and hoped that peace and security would prevail in those two countries. His delegation asked the Secretariat to explain the reasons for the late submission of the report. It supported the recommendations of ACABQ.

24. **Mr. Yeo** (Director of the Peacekeeping Financing Division), responding to the requests for clarification from the representatives of India and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, said that the timing of the submission of funding requests for peacekeeping missions, especially new or expanded ones, depended on when the Security Council adopted the relevant resolution and how quickly the Department could develop assumptions concerning the concept of operations and the funding requirements. Indeed, resolution 49/233 envisaged that

estimates for new missions would fluctuate and be subject to more than one review.

25. In the case of UNMEE, following the adoption of Security Council resolution 1312 (2000), on 31 July 2000, the Department had immediately obtained the Advisory Committee's commitment authority for initial funding of up to $50 million to cover the costs of start-up and related requirements. Only after the adoption on 15 September 2000 of resolution 1320 (2000) which specified the authorized staffing strength, could the Department begin to identify troop contributors and determine the feasibility of actual deployments. The Department's initial submission to the Controller's office, towards the end of October, had been based on the understanding that the numbers would keep changing as new information about the situation became available. By the end of November the Department could no longer wait to put the financing of UNMEE on the proper footing and had submitted its report, dated 4 December, to the Advisory Committee. It had endeavoured to make the initial budget as realistic as possible so as to maintain its credibility with the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee, and had informed the Advisory Committee as soon as confirmation had been received of the first deployments, which were now to take place in December rather than November. In any case, the submission of the report late in the session had not had an adverse impact on the Mission or its funding.

Agenda item 117: Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 (*continued*)

Revised estimates of resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2000 (A/C.5/55/25 and Corr.1 and Add.1; A/C.5/55/L.22)

26. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that many of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council would be financed from within existing provisions of the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. As requested by the Advisory Committee, the Secretary-General had for the first time indicated the level of funding for that category; the estimates amounted to $1.8 million in conference services and $33,900 in non-conference services under sections 2 and 22.

27. As indicated in the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/55/25 and Corr.1), additional funds would be required to implement Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/22, which called for the establishment of a permanent 16-member forum on indigenous issues which would hold an annual session of 10 working days. An estimated $114,800 would be needed under section 22 to meet non-conference costs if the forum was held in Geneva and $156,300 if it was to be held in New York. The Advisory Committee agreed with the Secretary-General's recommendation that $114,800 should be authorized for the forum to meet in Geneva in 2001. If it were to meet elsewhere, the additional costs would be reflected in the second performance report. The amount would be governed by the provisions concerning the use and operation of the contingency fund.

28. In its decision 2000/311 the Economic and Social Council had endorsed resolution S-5/1, adopted at the fifth special session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, which had established a human rights inquiry commission with respect to the occupied Palestinian territories, requested the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to undertake an urgent visit to the territories, and requested that immediate missions to the territories should be carried out by special rapporteurs who would report their findings to the Commission at its fifty-seventh session and, on an interim basis, to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session. The Advisory Committee recommended acceptance of the Secretary-General's estimate for the implementation of the resolution, namely $28,800 under section 2 and $741,600 under section 22 of the budget, to be charged against the contingency fund.

29. **Mr. Adam** (Israel) said that his delegation would require additional time for consultations on the draft decision in section A of document A/C.5/55/L.22.

30. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba) proposed that the text of the draft decision should be amended to indicate that the Committee also approved the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/55/L.62: Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan and the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (A/C.5/55/31; A/C.5/55/L.22)

31. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, pursuant to the Secretary-General's report on the situation in Afghanistan (A/55/633-S/2000/1106), the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan (UNSMA) would have a mandate to continue its primary peacemaking role and expand the scope of its activities in 2001. Accordingly, the implementation of draft resolution A/55/L.62 would require the strengthening of the Mission's staffing table by an increase in the authorized number of posts from 78 to 83 and the restoration of two military advisers, bringing the total number of advisers to four. The Advisory Committee recommended acceptance of the estimates proposed by the Secretary-General in his statement of programme budget implications (A/C.5/55/31) in the amount of $6,001,500 for 2001, as compared with the $3.3 million appropriated for 2000. An additional amount of $314,100 would be required for 2000. Since the entire $90.4 million authorized by the General Assembly for special missions had already been earmarked, an additional appropriation would be needed amounting to $6,315,600 under section 3 of the budget.

32. *The draft decision in section B of document A/C.5/55/L.22 was adopted.*

Revised estimates in respect of matters of which the Security Council is seized (A/55/7/Add.6; A/C.5/55/30; A/C.5/55/L.22)

33. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Secretary-General had submitted revised estimates totalling $4,162,500 in respect of five political missions (A/C.5/55/30). The Advisory Committee had made observations thereon in paragraphs 4 to 6 of its report (A/55/7/Add.6). Since all the resources authorized for special political missions had already been earmarked, the Advisory Committee recommended an additional appropriation of $4,162,500 under section 3 of the budget.

34. *The draft decision in section C document A/C.5/55/L.22 was adopted.*

Conditions of service and compensation for officials, other than Secretariat officials, serving the General Assembly: full-time members of the International Civil Service Commission and the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/C.5/55/29, A/C.5/55/L.22)

35. **Mr. Camarena** (Office of Human Resources Management), introducing the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/55/29), said that the conditions of service and compensation for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission and for the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, were reviewed every five years. In his report, the Secretary-General sought approval for two recommendations updating earlier decisions of the General Assembly on the conditions of service of the three officials.

36. On the matter of annual compensation, he said that General Assembly resolution 45/249 had set the amount for the two Chairmen at $135,692 plus a special allowance of $8,000 a year. The General Assembly had also established a cost-of-living adjustment procedure whereby 90 per cent of the consumer price index for New York was applied to those salaries, but with a 5-per-cent threshold trigger. Based on that procedure and the movement of the index over the past five years, the compensation of all three officials would be increased by 7 per cent with effect from 1 January 2001. An additional 3.1 per cent increase was recommended by the Secretary-General so as to restore the relationship with respect to annual net remuneration between the two Chairmen and other senior Secretariat officials that had existed at the time of the previous comprehensive review.

37. The Secretary-General further recommended that, since cost-of-living adjustments had been sporadic over the past five years, the 5-per-cent threshold for triggering such adjustments should be eliminated and the annual net compensation for the three officials should instead be adjusted once a year based on 90 per cent of the movement of the consumer price index for New York measured over the period November to November. It was also suggested that the special

allowance payable to the two Chairmen should be increased from $8,000 to $10,000.

38. Those increases would bring the total annual remuneration of the two Chairmen to $159,691 beginning on 1 January 2001. No other changes in conditions of service were being proposed. However, the cost-of-living increase of 7 per cent and the additional 3.1 per cent in remuneration would entail a corresponding adjustment in pensionable remuneration, under the provisions of General Assembly resolution 46/192. The pensionable remuneration of the two Chairmen would be raised from $175,400 to $194,599, and that of the Vice-Chairman of the Commission from $166,950 to $184,174.

39. **Mr. Nelson** (Canada) said that his delegation would prefer that the Committee first decide on the modalities of the International Civil Service Commission and on its recommendations before considering the remuneration of its officials. Accordingly, he proposed that the draft decision in section D of document A/C.5/55/L.22 should be amended by the addition of the words "... with respect to the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, and decides to defer the decision related to officials of the International Civil Service Commission to a later date".

40. **The Chairman** suggested that consultations should be held to arrive at an agreement on the wording.

41. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that, if a draft decision or resolution came before the Committee, his assumption was that consensus had been reached on the text. If delegates had reservations, the time to express them was during informal consultations so that the agreed text could be translated into all official languages and circulated 24 hours in advance.

42. **The Chairman** said that the proposed amendment to the draft decision in section D of document A/C.5/55/L.22 would be translated into all languages, that informal consultations would be held, and that the Committee would revert to the matter at its next formal meeting.

Review of the Information Systems Coordination Committee (A/55/7/Add.3 and A/55/619; A/C.5/55/L.22)

43. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), referring to the Secretary-General's recommendation, in paragraph 31 of his report (A/55/619) regarding the continued funding of the United Nations contribution to the Information Systems Coordination Committee for the biennium 2000-2001, drew attention to the Advisory Committee's observations and recommendations in paragraph 9 of its report (A/55/7/Add.3).

44. *The draft decision in section E of document A/C.5/55/L.22 was adopted.*

Agenda item 116: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (*continued*)

Agenda item 120: Administrative and budgetary coordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: First report: activities of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions during the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly (A/55/7; A/C.5/55/L.23)

45. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on its activities during the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly (A/55/7), said that part I provided background information, parts II and III dealt with meetings held in New York and meetings held away from Headquarters, and part IV contained observations and conclusions. As was indicated in part IV, during its meetings away from Headquarters, the Committee had focused on a number of key issues, including, in particular, results-based budgeting, human resource reform and training, and cooperation in the field. The annex to the report contained a list of the reports issued by the Advisory Committee. Although the workload had been heavy, the Advisory Committee had managed to report in a timely manner on all the relevant functions and activities.

46. *Draft decision A/C.5/55/L.23 was adopted.*

47. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) pointed out that the General Assembly recommendations contained in the Arabic versions of certain Advisory Committee documents did not appear in bold type, as they did in other language versions. He requested the Chairman to urge the competent bodies to ensure that all language versions reflected the same standard.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.